

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-24 are cancelled, and claims 25-41 are added. Thus, claims 25-41 are active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised in order to correct grammatical and idiomatic errors in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application, and to correct the informalities of the abstract as identified in item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action. The amendments to the specification and abstract are incorporated in the attached substitute specification and abstract. No new matter has been added.

Also attached hereto is a marked-up version of the substitute specification and abstract illustrating the changes made to the original specification and abstract.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for kindly considering the references listed on the October 2, 2001 Form PTO-1449, the November 30, 2001 Form PTO-1449, the February 25, 2004 Form PTO-1449 and the June 25, 2004 Form PTO-1449. However, as indicated in item 2 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner did not consider reference "AJ" (EP 268439) listed on the October 2, 2001 Form PTO-1449 because a copy of the reference and a concise statement of the relevance of this reference were not provided with the October 2, 2001 Information Disclosure Statement. A copy of reference "AJ" is submitted herewith. The Applicants submit that since reference "AJ" is an English language reference, there is no requirement to provide a concise statement of the relevance of this reference. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to consider reference "AJ" and to return a copy of the October 2, 2001 Form PTO-1449 to indicate consideration of this reference. A courtesy copy of the October 2, 2001 Form PTO-1449 is also submitted herewith for the Examiner's convenience.

The Applicants also thank the Examiner for kindly indicating that claims 2-4, 7-15, 17-19, 22 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

New claim 25 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 2. New claim 28 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 5-7. New claim 29 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims

1, 5-6 and 8. New claim 34 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 13. New claim 37 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 16-17. New claim 38 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 16 and 18. New claim 39 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 16 and 19. New claim 40 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1 and 21-22. New claim 41 includes the limitations originally presented in cancelled claims 1, 21 and 24.

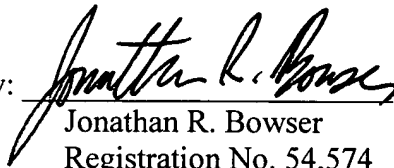
Accordingly, in view of the Examiner's assertion that claims 2-4, 7-15, 17-19, 22 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 25, 28-29, 34 and 37-41, as well as new claims 26-27, 30-33 and 35-36 which depend therefrom, are clearly in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is respectfully solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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